

of its lawful sphere in doing so; it has no authority. It is my right, it is my duty to dissolve it."

"He then hastily ran over the possible consequences of such a step. Separated from the Chambers, he could only be considered as a military chief: but the army would be for him; that would always join him who can lead it against foreign banners, and to this might be added all that part of the population which is equally powerful and easily led in such a state of things. As if chance intended to strengthen Napoleon in this train of thought, while he was speaking the avenue of Marigny resounded with the cries of *'Vive PEm-pereur !'* A crowd of men, chiefly of the poor and laboring class, pressed forward into the avenue, full of a wild enthusiasm, and trying to scale the walls to make an offer to Napoleon to rally round and defend him. Bonaparte for some time looked attentively at this group. 'You see it is so,'⁷ said lie ; 'those are not the men whom I have loaded with honors and riches. What do these people owe me ? I found them — I left them — poor. The instinct of necessity enlightens them; the voice of the country speaks by their mouths; and if I choose, if I permit it, in an hour the refractory Chambers will have ceased to exist. But the life of a man is not worth purchasing at such a price : I did not return from the Isle of Elba that Paris should be inundated with blood.' He did not like the idea of flight. 'Why should I not stay here ?' he repeated. 'What do you suppose they would do to a man disarmed like me ? I will go to Malmaison: I can live there in retirement with some friends, who most certainly will come to see me only for my own sake.'

^a He then described with complacency and even with a sort of gayety this new kind of life. Afterwards, discarding an idea which sounded like mere irony, he went on. 'If they do not like me to remain in France, where am I to go ? To England ? My abode there would be ridiculous or disquieting. I should be tranquil; no one would believe it. Every fog would be suspected of concealing my landing on the coast. At the first sight of a green coat getting out of a boat one party would fly from France, the other would put France